

FWP COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: October 13, 2011 **Agenda Item:** Update on Scoping 2012-2013 Season Setting

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Informational

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 30 minutes

Background

Hunting season structures for deer, elk, antelope, moose, sheep, goat, bison, black bear, mountain lion, and upland birds are currently adopted for two-year intervals (biennium). Biennial season setting also includes game damage and management season quotas and may include statewide elements of migratory bird seasons. Given the start and stop pattern of delisting/relisting, wolf season setting has been a mix of both biennial and annual commission actions. While regional and other FWP staff routinely engage the public throughout the year, the formal season setting process has historically started with the public introduction of "Tentative" proposals in December of odd years. Opportunity for public comment, and public introduction of alternative proposals/tentatives, have been available at this December meeting. Tentative adoptions from this same December meeting are then made available for public comment through most of January. This includes more than 40 meetings, hearings, and open houses across the state. Final proposals and adoptions take place in February so that regulation booklets may be available for spring bear and turkey seasons and nonresident deer and elk license application deadlines.

While the biennial season-setting process has successfully generated considerable public comment to FWP and the commission, one criticism was the lack of public participation opportunity prior to initial proposals being framed by FWP. In response to this criticism, FWP has inserted an additional scoping step during the summer and early fall prior to the December meeting. This scoping includes: 1) two additional FWP Commission presentations or discussions (July and October); 2) public comment opportunities thru Sept. 6; and 3) one open house in each administrative region.

Public Involvement Process & Results

In all, approximately 150 public comments were submitted with another 10 internal submissions. Many of these address multiple species and most (131) were submitted via an electronic format available on the FWP website. The open houses were lightly attended. Season scoping comments have been forwarded to the commission and FWP staff for review and consideration. From the electronic format, general satisfaction with existing seasons was a prevalent theme. Specific advocacies for change included more restrictive harvest for antlered and antlerless deer, once in a lifetime draws for moose, sheep and goat and a hybrid license/quota system for lions. A more detailed summary will be presented at the October meeting. The October informational session with the commission is to generally summarize these scoping results and to identify any commission direction or emphasis prior to formal proposals being presented at the Dec.8 meeting.